484 his protégés as Wa-tzu after they have entered the I region. For this kind of intrigue (protection and then sale), there is a special term 567 known as "chuang t'ung-tzu" /to load a barrel/. A considerable number of Chinese merchants going into Liang-shan have undergone this experience as we discovered through our conversations with the Wa-tzu of Chinese origin in our recent trip through Liang-shan. The Wu-ch'i chia in Lei-po hsien /132/ are particularly fond of this ruse. On the whole, the I are rather tactful in their dealings: in general, they dare not touch the officials but they have no qualms in humbugging the merchants. For the latter who think only of profit, this is a very good lesson. Quite a few opium merchants thought they could make easy money in Liang-shan, but just as they were about to leave the place with bags full of money, they were carried away to become Wa-tzu, never again to return to their native land. This is certainly a most remarkable retribution.

Once a Chinese has been captured in Liang-shan, the chances for his escape are very slight. Even ransom is difficult. He does not remain as Wa-tzu at one definite place, but is sold as merchandise wherever there is profit, until finally even he himself does not know where he is. In these repeated sales, there are innumerable cases in which a native of Lei-po is carried all the way to Hsi-ch'ang and a native of Hsi-ch'ang to Ma-pien. In the case of a whole family of Chinese captives, the I cause much sorrow by separating wife, husband and children, so that they would never see each other again. The I hope thus to prevent the captives from joining forces and escaping together. With this system in force, very few of the Chinese captives can ever hope to return. Resistance will lead to killing, and submission to slavery, old age and death in the I region. Whoever goes to Liang-shan can often meet those Chinese who have been forced to become Wa-tzu in the I region for dozens of years. No wonder the Chinese living near its borders fear going there.

485 The hardships of traveling are another difficulty one encounters in a field trip to Liang-shan. At present the standard of living of an average Chinese is not high, but when compared to that of the I of Liang-shan, the difference between them is like that between the sky and sea, and may be measured by centuries. While traveling, we had no place to eat at noon and no bed to sleep on at night except the ground at the home of some impoverished I family. Thus muddy ground often serves as bed, buckwheat buns as food, and the most unsanitary unboiled water as drink. There is no boiled water or tea. Salt lumps

must also be carried along. It is hardship enough for a Chinese, who is 483
accustomed to eating rice, to be forced to rely on cereals for his food, but when other discomforts are added to it, life then becomes unbearable. Perhaps our living conditions in a civilized society are all too comfortable. Of course, with ample funds and adequate means of communication, it is possible to diminish some of the hardships by bringing white rice and other customary foods into the I region. Actually this was what the various study groups had done in the past. On our present trip, however, we did not take any food because first, we did not have adequate funds; second, /133/ communication was difficult; and third, we wanted to experience fully life in the I district in order to make an even closer study and to understand better the hardships of the I themselves.

Communication is a great difficulty at present. Formerly the 484
majority of the gentlemen making field studies of Liang-shan traveled by means of the sedan chair, and were not too much troubled by poor roads. Our group decided from the very start to make the entire journey by foot. This eliminated the necessity and inconvenience of looking for sedan chairs, but also made us experience to the full difficulties of traveling in the Liang-shan region. The greatest trouble is that the I do not wear straw shoes so that those which we needed for ourselves and the coolies for the journey had to be carried all the way from Hsi-ch'ang. Our estimate of the number needed proved however to be inadequate, for in addition to the unavoidable wastefulness on the part of the coolies, poor roads also quickly wore out the shoes. When we reached Lei-po after walking across Liang-shan, we were all wearing our last pair of straw shoes. If an extra day of walking had been required, we would have had to walk barefoot on the stony paths of the I region in a most distressing state.

In Hsi-ch'ang Mr. Ch'ang Lung-ch'ing repeatedly advised us to disregard high prices and hire Chinese coolies to transport the luggage to Lei-po. All the groups making field studies of Liang-shan had done this in the past. Remuneration was made in the form of daily payment as well as meals (taken at the home of the I and paid in a lump sum by each study group). Even opium, which these Chinese carriers cannot do without, must be bought and taken along for them. We agreed with Mr. Ch'ang that it would not be a reliable or economical plan to hire the I to carry things along the road; it would merely cause additional inconveniences. Conditions have, however, changed greatly since the War of Resistance. Manpower is lacking in the rear

435 is a little below average, the host is usually too embarrased to ask for more. But not so with regard to salt. Even if a sufficent amount of cloth is given, the host or hostess, and even the tang-chia Wa-tzu, 435 will still attempt to "borrow" some salt from the guest. When too many 263 people ask for it, one can only break up the salt lumps and give every one a pinch. The salt eaten in the I districts west of the Mei-ku River comes from Yen-yüan hsien, so that the people there are more than satisfied with the salt from Hsi-ch'ang. The I east of Mei-ku River are much harder to please for they are used to the snow-white salt produced at Wu-t'ung-ch'iao and imported from Lei-po, and find the salt lumps from Yen-yüan hsien much too black and dirty.

485 For one night's lodging and two meals at a Heh-I family, a re- 435 muneration of four pieces of cloth is sufficient for a group of ten or fewer people; to give six pieces is more than generous. Those who are more familiar with the situation can get by with just one piece of cloth and two chin of salt for one or two people. Those who know the host very well can save even more by negotiating with the host beforehand so that both parties need not spend excessive sums, but make a simple exchange of salt and cloth for food. Half a chin of salt brings in more potatoes than needed. One cannot avoid being somewhat wasteful in one's first trip through Liang-shan. For example, we brought along a considerable amount of salt and cloth in our recent trip, but on mid-way we discovered the danger of having too little on hand. /138/ Everything was exhausted by the time we reached Lei-po, and we still owed the I some salt lumps. To be properly prepared is not an easy matter.

485 Gifts of salt and cloth to the host are a necessity, but in addition 431 there are other social requirements. It is considered impolite not to present gifts such as needles, thread, woolen yarns, etc., to the hostess and her daughters. Anyone left out will come forth to ask for her share. It is also advisable to give one chin of salt to the tang-chia Wa-tzu, and some needles and thread to the ya-t'o (female servants) who serve at meals. Gifts to other Wa-tzu who come to ask are not a necessity; it depends upon the savoir-faire of the guest.

482 The host may be approached in the matter of hiring his Wa-tzu 435 in the transportation of luggage. A price is set by the master for each Wa-tzu, and the guest must pay without bargaining with the latter. 804 The pay given to each Wa-tzu is generally from half a chin to two chin of salt for one station depending upon the distance. Once the carriers have been appointed, the salt is weighed and paid immediately. An